**EXPERIENCE THE PRE-CHRISTMAS VARIETY OF THE INNSBRUCK REGION**

## **The Advent and Christmas seasons in the mountains of Tyrol are something very special: atmospheric and comforting, they are marked by living traditions and endearing customs. Perhaps the finest place to experience this time of year is in the Innsbruck region: with this year’s completely redesigned LUMAGICA Innsbruck light park, its seven unique Christmas markets and rich alpine-urban ambience, the city invites guests to experience the magic of Christmas.**

Once the first snows have dusted the mountain peaks surrounding Innsbruck, the city too starts to get in the mood for the most atmospheric time of the year: from mid-November onwards, the Christmas markets and the brightly decorated streets and squares combine to create a joyful feeling. The large Christmas tree in front of the Golden Roof, an exhibition of beautiful nativity scenes, as well as market stalls offering handmade artworks and delicacies from around the region, all create a particularly festive atmosphere in the historic old town. Hardly anywhere else is the winter fairytale so perfectly staged as in the Innsbruck region, where you can experience the magic of Christmas throughout the region with every one of your senses. Each day provides its own traditional Advent experience with a variety of enchanting markets and special events to enjoy. Innsbruck invites guests on a Christmas journey, both literally and symbolically.

**LUMAGICA Innsbruck: a round-the-world trip in the magical park of lights**

After two successful seasons, the LUMAGICA Innsbruck light park is returning to the Tyrolean capital for a third time this year: from 18 November 2022, when the magical light park opens its doors in Innsbruck’s Imperial Gardens, visitors can marvel at all kinds of new light installations. It can now be revealed that LUMAGICA Innsbruck is going on a world tour this year, as visitors become passengers and a Tyrolean marmot invites them to join him on a journey in his balloon. The 1.5-kilometre tour through the wintry natural scenery of the Imperial Gardens touches upon all the continents, with themes ranging from London and Paris to Africa and Australia, before the marmot returns his guests safely to the city. The colourful and interactive light shows can be experienced until 29 January 2023.

**Swarovski Crystal Worlds: a winter wonderland at the home of the Green Giant**

Once the Green Giant and the large gardens are covered with the first traces of snow, another magical experience awaits visitors to the Swarovski Crystal Worlds in Wattens. The latest Chamber of Wonders, “Umbra” by the light artist James Turrell, is a meditative experience of light, while “The Art of Performance” inspires glamorous styling for the festive season. For those who like to gift their loved ones shared experiences at Christmastime, the Winter Wonderland at the Swarovski Crystal Worlds offers creatives and art enthusiasts an entertaining programme on Advent Sundays and during the Christmas holidays: making Xmas stars and tree decorations in the crystal studio, guided tours through the Chambers of Wonder or winter clubbing events in the play tower will fill the cold days with sparkling fun.

**Innsbruck’s Christmas in the Mountains: seven Christmas markets for an alpine-urban Christmas experience**

Innsbruck’s Christmas in the Mountains is Tyrol’s largest “Christmas Wonderland”, with seven Christmas markets to browse, admire and enjoy. The oldest is that held in the old town, on the market square right in front of the Golden Roof, which is famed for its family programme; while the Panoramic Hungerburg Christmas market offers the best views over the wintry city. Visitors to the market on Maria-Theresien-Strasse, Innsbruck’s central shopping street, can also stroll and sample the specialities offered by the stalls. The market in the St. Nikolaus district is small and indeed serene: and the “Christmas Magic” in Wilten, at the foot of the Bergisel, is steeped in history. Here can be found a special, atmospheric market beneath the imposing Bergisel ski jump, where the focus of the Imperial “Kaiser Christmas” is on what is original.

**Walks to explore: discovering Innsbruck at Christmas on foot**

Fans of Christmas can see the seven markets of Innsbruck’s Christmas in the Mountains especially well on a leisurely walk through the city – “Christmas market hopping”, as it were. This Christmas tour of discovery starts at the oldest of Innsbruck’s seven Christmas markets, with its majestic Christmas tree right in front of the Golden Roof, under which are lined up the market stalls offering Christmas tree decorations, handicrafts and a variety of delightful specialities. The viewing platform above the roofs of the stands guarantees special vistas of Innsbruck’s glittering landmark and the magnificent Christmas tree. The theatre performances, and the delightful lane featuring scenes of fairytales and giants, create a wonderful fantasy world in the old town and are sure make children’s eyes light up. The youngest visitors in particular look forward to the Christmas market on the square, but it can honestly be said that the wide range of offers and family-friendly attractions, all in a Christmassy atmosphere, will also delight the grown-ups! With its unique sparkling star, the glittering Swarovski crystal tree is, as ever, also an eye-catcher. Continue then to Maria-Theresien-Strasse, Innsbruck’s boulevard, where glass, light and crystal predominate: Christmas articles from all over the world, shimmering trees and giant Christmas baubles that can even be walked through all lend the “modern market” a special ambience. The itinerary next heads high up on the Hungerburg funicular, which whisks visitors up to the Hungerburg Christmas market in a just ten minutes. This, Innsbruck’s highest market, not only affords fantastic views over the city, but also offers a small yet exquisite selection of delicacies and various Christmas keepsakes. Then it is back to the city and on to St. Nikolaus, Innsbruck’s oldest district, where the soothing music, heady scent of yuletide biscuits and lovingly designed stalls entirely capture the pre-Christmas mood. Another place for sincere contemplation, where genuine handicrafts, fine culinary delights and a specially selected cultural programme all meet is the Christmas market on the square in Wilten. Serene, romantic and very special, here you can enjoy the magic of Christmas to the full. The Imperial “Kaiser Christmas” on the Bergisel marks the end of the city walk with the newest market to figure in Innsbruck’s Christmas in the Mountains: held directly below the impressive ski jump, here too can be found festively decorated stalls and displays of numerous local and regional crafts.

**Experience the traditions and customs in the villages of the region**

The villages in the Innsbruck region, too, host small-scale, fine and especially atmospheric Advent experiences and traditional happenings that make the wait for Christmas sweeter, with a variety of festive fare: in Igls, St. Nicholas enters the village accompanied by angels and Krampus figures, traditional choirs sing popular carols in Oberperfuss, while the villages of Patsch, Rinn, Oberperfuss and Telfs all invite you to sample their Advent markets. Christmas in the Mountains in the village of Igls is particularly rich in tradition: one day before Christmas Eve, angels, shepherds and their flocks parade through the village and ring in the Christmas festivities with a rendition of “Silent Night, Holy Night”. An idyllic winter walk, starting from Oberperfuss parish church, leads to the village’s wonderful nativity scenes. Close to the village centre, in the district of Huebe, there is a special countdown to Christmas: every evening another beautifully decorated window is lit up in the houses as a little door is opened on the Advent calendar. Finally, the community of Wildermieming-Affenhausen is home to particular masterpieces of nativity scene art, where some fifty scenes from various epochs and regions can be admired in front of matching background paintings.

All information on the individual Advent events can be obtained directly from the tourist information offices in the respective municipalities.

***About Innsbruck Tourismus***

*Innsbruck Tourismus is the official destination management organisation for the Innsbruck region, encompassing the capital of Tyrol and over 40 localities in the surrounding area, from the Inntal valley to the Mieming Plateau via Kühtai and as far as the Sellraintal valley. With almost 3.5 million overnight stays (as of 2019), the Innsbruck region is one of Austria’s largest tourism institutions – a unique symbiosis of pulsating urban space and fascinating Alpine world. The vibrant city atmosphere and sightseeing highlights are just a stone’s throw from your next biking or hiking tour, your next ski adventure or winter walk. The Welcome Card, free for visitors, is the key to the region’s boundless opportunities: public transport, usable at no cost, means that the area’s numerous highlights can be enjoyed both sustainably and comfortably. Visitor enjoyment is the focus of the thoughts and actions of each of the organisation’s 90 or so staff: they pass on their passion and enthusiasm for this alpine-urban space to guests, ensuring unforgettable holiday experiences for all in harmony with both people and nature. With a total of twelve tourist information offices, Innsbruck Tourismus can stay close to visitors, be right in the action and keep a finger on the pulse of events – a true hub for the authentic stories and personal impressions of local characters that can be found on the popular* *blog* *and social media channels at #myinnsbruck.*

***Further links***

*Blog:* [*www.innsbruck.info/blog*](http://www.innsbruck.info/blog%20)

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